Amendment to the Claims

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claim 64, amend Claims 57, 58, 63, 65, and 71, and add new Claims 91-95, as follows:

1-56. (Cancelled)

57. (Currently Amended) A method of using synthetic fabric scrap comprising delustered synthetic fibers as a sorbent material for a liquid hydrocarbon, comprising the steps of:

(a) sorting textile scrap to reduce an amount of natural fiber based textile scrap in a quantity of textile scrap, such that the quantity of textile scrap comprises a majority of synthetic textile scrap and a minority of natural fiber based textile scrap;

(b) shredding ~~said synthetic fabric scrap~~ the quantity of textile scrap to produce a mass comprising a plurality of discrete synthetic fibers, the mass comprising a majority of recycled delustered synthetic fibers and a minority of recycled natural fibers;

([[b]]c) bringing said mass into contact with a liquid hydrocarbon;

([[c]]d) allowing said mass to sorb the liquid hydrocarbon; and

([[d]]e) mechanically collecting said mass after the hydrocarbon product has been sorbed by the mass.

58. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of shredding the ~~mass of synthetic fibers~~ quantity of textile scrap is carried out until ~~said synthetic fibers are~~ the quantity of textile scrap is processed into a majority of relatively shorter fiber lengths, and a minority of relatively longer fiber lengths.

59. (Original) The method of Claim 58, further comprising the step of blending said relatively shorter fiber lengths and said relatively longer fiber lengths together to form a sorbent wadded mass characterized as having a substantial volume of internal interstices, said relatively longer fiber lengths helping to bind said sorbent wadded mass together into a flexible and cohesive mass.

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60. (Original) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of allowing said wadded mass to sorb the liquid hydrocarbon comprises the steps of:

(a) allowing said wadded mass to adsorb a portion of said liquid hydrocarbon upon surfaces of the relatively shorter fibers and the relatively longer fibers; and

(b) allowing said wadded mass to absorb a portion of said liquid hydrocarbon within said substantial volume of internal interstices.

61. (Canceled)

62. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 57, wherein said delustered fibers were delustered with titanium dioxide.

63. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of shredding ~~said mass of synthetic fibers~~ the quantity of textile scrap is carried out so as to produce a majority of said synthetic fibers having a length in the range of from about 10 mm to about 20 mm, and a minority of said synthetic fibers having a length in the range of from about 75 mm to about 100 mm.

64. (Canceled)

65. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 64~~ Claim 57, wherein the step of ~~segregating synthetic fabric scrap provides a mass of synthetic fabric scrap comprising about 90% synthetic fiber~~ sorting the textile scrap to reduce the amount of natural fiber based textile scrap in the quantity of textile scrap comprises the step of sorting the textile scrap so as to limit the amount of natural fiber based textile scrap in the quantity of textile scrap to about ten percent or less.

66. (Original) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of shredding comprises the step of controlling a processing rate while shredding the fabric scrap to achieve a desired reduction of fabric scrap into fiber.

67. (Original) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of shredding comprises the step of reducing an amount of flags present in the fiber being generated to a desired level.

68. (Original) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of shredding comprises the step of adjusting a height between a table on which the synthetic fabric scrap is disposed and a cutting drum employed to shred the synthetic fabric scrap.

69. (Original) The method of Claim 57, wherein the step of shredding comprises the step of adjusting a height between a table on which the synthetic fabric scrap is disposed and a pinning drum employed to shred the synthetic fabric scrap.

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70. (Original) The method of Claim 57, further comprising the step of segregating synthetic fabric scrap to remove larger pieces of synthetic fabric scrap, and then shredding only a remaining mass of the synthetic fabric scrap.

71. (Currently Amended) A method for removing liquid hydrocarbon from a surface contaminated with the liquid hydrocarbon, comprising the steps of:

(a) ~~providing a recycled delustered synthetic fiber based sorbent, the recycled delustered synthetic fiber based sorbent comprising a majority of recycled delustered synthetic fibers~~ sorting textile scrap to reduce an amount of natural fiber based textile scrap in a quantity of textile scrap, such that the quantity of textile scrap comprises a majority of synthetic textile scrap and a minority of natural fiber based textile scrap;

(b) shredding the quantity of textile scrap to produce a mass comprising a plurality of discrete synthetic fibers, the mass comprising a majority of recycled delustered synthetic fibers and a minority of recycled natural fibers;

(c) collecting the liquid hydrocarbon by:

(i) bringing said delustered synthetic fiber based sorbent into contact with the liquid hydrocarbon; and

(ii) allowing the delustered synthetic fiber based sorbent to adsorb the liquid hydrocarbon from the contaminated surface, adsorbed hydrocarbons accumulating upon a plurality of rough, delustered surfaces of said delustered synthetic fiber based sorbent; and

([[c]]d) mechanically removing said delustered synthetic fiber based sorbent from the contaminated surface.

72.-90. (Canceled)

91. (New) The method of Claim 71, wherein the step of sorting textile scrap to reduce an amount of natural fiber based textile scrap in the quantity of textile scrap comprises the step of sorting the textile scrap so as to limit the amount of natural fiber based textile scrap in the quantity of textile scrap to less than about four percent.

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92. (New) The method of Claim 57, wherein the steps of sorting and shredding the textile scrap are carried out to achieve a wadded mass of fibers comprising:

(a) a plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers, said relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers having rough, delustered surfaces, wherein said plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers comprises a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers; and

(b) a plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers, said relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers having rough, delustered surfaces, said relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers and said rough delustered surfaces binding said plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers and said plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic fibers into a wadded mass, said wadded mass including a plurality of interstitial spaces and having a density that is substantially less than that of water, so that said wadded mass readily floats on a surface of a body of water, wherein said plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers comprises a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers.

93. (New) The method of Claim 57, wherein the steps of sorting and shredding the textile scrap are carried out to achieve a wadded mass of fibers comprising:

(a) a plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers, a majority of said plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers having lengths ranging from about 10 mm to about 20 mm, wherein said plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers comprises a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers; and

(b) a plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers, a majority of said plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers having lengths ranging from about 70 mm to about 90 mm, said relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers binding said plurality of relatively shorter hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers and said plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic fibers into said wadded mass, wherein said plurality of relatively longer hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers comprises a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers.

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94. (New) The method of Claim 57, wherein the steps of sorting and shredding the textile scrap are carried out to achieve fibers comprising:

(a) a plurality of relatively shorter delustered hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers, wherein said plurality of relatively shorter delustered hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers comprises a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers; and

(b) a plurality of relatively longer delustered hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers, wherein said plurality of relatively longer delustered hydrophobic and lipophilic synthetic fibers comprises a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers.

95. (New) The method of Claim 57, wherein the steps of sorting and shredding the textile scrap are carried out to achieve fibers comprising:

(a) a mixture of polyester fibers and nylon fibers; and

(b) a mixture of relatively shorter fibers and relatively longer fibers.

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